

# **Gustav Davidson**

## **A Register of His Papers in the Library of Congress**

**Prepared by Karen Linn Femia**



**Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**

**Washington, D.C.**

**2001**

Contact information: <http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/mss/address.html>

**Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress  
Manuscript Division, 2003**

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## Collection Summary

**Title:** Papers of Gustav Davidson

**Span Dates:** 1909-1992

**Bulk Dates:** (bulk 1931-1971)

**ID No.:** MSS84137

**Creator:** Davidson, Gustav, 1895-1971

**Extent:** 8,000 items; 27 containers plus 1 oversize; 12 linear feet

**Language:** Collection material in English

**Repository:** Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

**Abstract:** Poet, writer, publisher, and secretary of the Poetry Society of America. Primarily writings and correspondence concerning Davidson's work in poetry, publishing, and research on angels.

## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### Names:

Davidson, Gustav, 1895-1971

Angoff, Charles, 1902- --Correspondence

Auslander, Joseph, 1897- --Correspondence

Decker, Clarence Raymond, 1904-1969--Correspondence

Dorn, Alfred, 1929- --Correspondence

Eastman, Max, 1883-1969--Correspondence

Orlinsky, Harry Meyer, 1908- --Correspondence

Roethke, Theodore, 1908-1963--Correspondence

Trattner, Ernest R. (Ernest Robert), 1898- --Correspondence

Untermeyer, Louis, 1885-1977--Correspondence

Poetry Society of America

### Subjects:

American poetry

Angels

Poetry--Societies, etc.

Oceania--Description and travel

### Occupations:

Authors

Poets

Publishers

## Administrative Information

### Provenance:

The papers of Gustav Davidson, poet, writer, publisher, and secretary of the Poetry Society of America, were given to the Library of Congress by Babette Bandler in 1997.

### Copyright Status:

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Gustav Davidson in these papers and in other collections in the custody of the Library of Congress is reserved. Consult a reference librarian in the Manuscript Division for further information.

### Preferred Citation:

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Gustav Davidson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1895, Dec. 25	Born, Warsaw, Poland
1897	Family immigrated to the United States and settled in New York, N. Y.
1915	Published with Joseph Koven <i>Melmoth, the Wanderer; a Play in Five Acts</i> . Boston: The Poet Lore Co.
1917-1918	Founder and editor, <i>Madrigal Magazine</i>
1919	B.A., Columbia University, New York, N. Y.
1920	M.A., Columbia University, New York, N. Y.
1922-1923	Founder and editor, <i>Rhythmus Magazine</i>
1924	Published <i>A Half Century of Sonnets</i> . New York: N. L. Brown
1927-1929	Leader of the Australasian expedition to the South Seas
1929-1931	Book and music critic, editorial writer, and associate editor, <i>The Daily Mirror</i> , New York, N. Y.
1938-1939	Bibliographer in children's literature, Library of Congress
1940	Founded the Fine Editions Press
1942	Married Mollie Strauss
1942-1953	Founder and publisher, <i>The Poetry Chap-Book</i>
1945	Published <i>Thirst of the Antelope</i> . La Porte, Ind.: The Dierkes Press
1949-1965	Executive secretary, Poetry Society of America
1950	Published <i>Moment of Visitation</i> . Denver, Colo.: Alan Swallow
1965	Elected executive secretary emeritus, Poetry Society of America Published <i>Ambushed by Angels</i> . London: Outposts Publications
1967	Published <i>A Dictionary of Angels, Including the Fallen Angels</i> . New York: Free Press
1970	Published <i>All Things Are Holy</i> . Georgetown, Calif.: Dragon's Teeth Press
1971, Feb. 6	Died, New York, N. Y.

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Gustav Davidson (1895-1971) span the years 1909-1992, with the bulk of the material dating from 1931 to 1971. The papers consist primarily of correspondence, writings, research material, and items related to the Poetry Society of America. The papers are organized in the following series: [General Correspondence](#), [Personal Name File](#), [Writings](#),

Subject File, and Oversize. The Oversize consists of scrapbooks of articles and reviews published in *The Daily Mirror*, 1931-1932.

The General Correspondence consists of miscellaneous personal and routine professional correspondence, primarily incoming.

The Personal Name File holds material Davidson collected concerning his frequent correspondents, personal friends, fellow poets, theological scholars, and professional associates. Correspondence with these individuals is located in this series, in addition to news clippings, writings, photographs, and printed matter. Notable correspondents include Charles Angoff, Joseph Auslander, Clarence Raymond Decker, Alfred Dorn, Max Eastman, Harry Meyer Orlinsky, Theodore Roethke, Ernest R. Trattner, and Louis Untermeyer.

The Writings series contains drafts and published copies of Davidson's writings as well as publicity, reviews, and correspondence with publishers. Davidson wrote in many genres: poetry, plays, reviews, newspaper columns, and academic writings primarily about angels. Included in the collection are annotated copies of books. A file labeled "Pseudonymous writings" contains items written by Davidson under the name W. Gordon Drake for the Free Thought publication *The Age of Reason Magazine*.

The Subject File is organized topically and includes biographical material, items pertaining to Davidson's "Fine Editions Press" and other publication projects, material from his youthful trips to the South Sea islands, research files, correspondence from various organizations and publications, photographs, and news clippings. Of particular note is a large file on the Poetry Society of America, an organization that Davidson served for many years. Poetry Society awards, dinners, trips, membership lists, publication projects, board meetings, and elections are documented in the file.

## Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in five series:

- General Correspondence, 1926-1984, n.d.
- Personal Name File, 1921-1992, n.d.
- Writings, 1915-1981, n.d.
- Subject File, 1909-1991, n.d.
- Oversize, 1930-1932

## Description of Series

<i>Container</i>	<i>Series</i>
BOX 1-2	<b><u>General Correspondence, 1926-1984, n.d.</u></b> Miscellaneous correspondence with attachments. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 2-7	<b><u>Personal Name File, 1921-1992, n.d.</u></b> Correspondence with writers and acquaintances and news clippings, photographs, and writings by and about them. Arranged alphabetically by name and chronologically therein.
BOX 7-15	<b><u>Writings, 1915-1981, n.d.</u></b> Drafts, published copies, correspondence with publishers, publicity, and reviews of Davidson's articles, books, plays, poetry, reviews, and travel journals. Arranged alphabetically by type of writing and chronologically therein
BOX 15-27	<b><u>Subject File, 1909-1991, n.d.</u></b> Correspondence, biographical material, financial matter, name and address lists, news clippings, miscellaneous writings, photographs, and research files on angels and religious topics. Arranged alphabetically.
BOX OV 1	<b><u>Oversize, 1930-1932</u></b> Scrapbooks. Described according to the series, container, and folder from which the items were removed.

# Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
<b>BOX 1-2</b>	<b>General Correspondence, 1926-1984, n.d.</b> Miscellaneous correspondence with attachments. Arranged chronologically.
<b>BOX 1</b>	1926-1965 (12 folders)
<b>BOX 2</b>	1966-1977, 1984, n.d. (7 folders)
<b>BOX 2-7</b>	<b>Personal Name File, 1921-1992, n.d.</b> Correspondence with writers and acquaintances and news clippings, photographs, and writings by and about them. Arranged alphabetically by name and chronologically therein.
<b>BOX 2</b>	Abbe, George, 1956-1964, n.d.  Ames, Bernice, 1968-1976, n.d.  Andrews, Marietta Minnigerode, 1927-1928, n.d.
<b>BOX 3</b>	Angoff, Charles, 1963-1970, n.d.  Auslander, Joseph, 1932-1937, 1965  Ban, Eva, 1970-1978, n.d.  Bernard, R. W., 1956  Buonocore, Michaelina, 1959-1960, 1974-1976, n.d.  Chubb, Thomas Caldecot, 1960-1971, n.d.  Clare, Patricia, 1968-1971, n.d.  Comandini, Adele, 1956, 1968-1971, n.d.  Corrado, Anne, 1970-1979, n.d.  Cunningham, Basil ("Sterns"), 1963-1974, n.d.  Davidson, Mollie  1944, 1955-1985, 1992, n.d. (4 folders)

**Personal Name File, 1921-1992, n.d.**

***Container***

***Contents***

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**BOX 4**

Davidson family, 1940, 1961-1969, n.d.

Decker, Clarence Raymond, 1954-1969

Deford, Miriam Allen, 1958-1965

Dorn, Alfred, 1956-1980, 1987, n.d.  
(3 folders)

Droutzkoy, Alexis, 1956-1969

Eastman, Max, and Eliena Krylenko, 1951-1962

Edgett, Edwin, 1938, n.d.

Elise, 1933

Fay, Alice, 1929, n.d.

Gaster, Theodor, 1956-1958

Gilbert-Read, Pat, 1962-1969

Ginsberg, Allen, 1958, 1965-1966, 1975

Ginsberg, Louis, 1943, 1965-1970, 1976, n.d.

Gogarty, Oliver St. John, 1953-1957, n.d.

Guli, Francesca, 1966-1971

Haberly, Loyd, 1965-1971, n.d.

Handley-Taylor, Geoffrey, 1959-1969, n.d.  
(2 folders)

Hill, Hyacinthe, 1964-1974

Josten, Werner, 1936

Kay, Ernest, 1967-1972

**BOX 5**

Keith, Joseph Joel, 1948-1949, 1964

Larson, Frank and Muriel, 1969-1970

Lengyel, Cornel, 1967-1983, 1996, n.d.  
(3 folders)

**Personal Name File, 1921-1992, n.d.**

***Container***

***Contents***

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	Lomer, Gerhard R., 1935, 1959-1967, n.d.
	Marx, Anne, 1959-1976, n.d. (2 folders)
	Masefield, John, 1921-1924, 1930-1934, n.d.
	Moore, Harry T., 1955-1957
	Morris, Harry, 1958-1963, n.d.
	Mullins, Helene, 1969-1976, n.d.
	Nash, Ogden, 1960
	Orlinsky, Harry Meyer  1941-1954
<b>BOX 6</b>	1955-1972, n.d. (6 folders)
	Palmer, Winthrop, 1958-1960, n.d.
	Peardon, Patricia, 1968-1970, n.d.
	Pearson, Norman Holmes, 1960-1964, 1980
	Peirse, Juanita, 1952, 1970-1971, n.d.
	Perry, J. Warren, 1965-1971
	Roethke, Theodore, 1950, 1959
<b>BOX 7</b>	Romano, Liboria, 1961-1979
	Salmi, Sylvia, and Herbert Solow, 1959, 1964-1971, n.d.
	Scholem, Gershom G., 1958
	Scovel, Myra, 1970-1974, n.d.
	Solomos, George, 1959-1966, n.d.
	Smith, Homer W., 1952-1956
	Steinman, David B., 1956-1958
	Stephens, Wade, 1968-1969



**Personal Name File, 1921-1992, n.d.**

**Container**

**Contents**

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Tall, Grace, 1965-1980, n.d.

Trattner, Ernest R., 1954-1963, n.d.  
(2 folders)

Tucker, Martin, 1970-1972

Untermeyer, Louis, 1956-1961, n.d.

Wagner, Charles A., 1945, 1957, 1969-1970, n.d. *For additional material see Containers 19-21, Poetry Society of America*

West, Robert H., 1950-1958, n.d.

Wheelock, John Hall, 1965, 1971

Yuzon, Amado M., 1966-1972, n.d.  
(3 folders)

**BOX 7-15**

**Writings, 1915-1981, n.d.**

Drafts, published copies, correspondence with publishers, publicity, and reviews of Davidson's articles, books, plays, poetry, reviews, and travel journals.

Arranged alphabetically by type of writing and chronologically therein

**BOX 7**

Articles

Drafts

ca. 1931-ca. 1950

**BOX 8**

1960-1970, n.d.  
(6 folders)

Published copies

1931-1932, 1939, 1946-1950, 1959-1964 *For additional material see Containers 27 and OV I, Scrapbooks*  
(3 folders)

**BOX 9**

1965-1970, n.d.

Book reviews

Drafts, 1946-1949, n.d.

Published copies, 1932, 1943-1950, 1970, n.d. *For additional material see Containers 27 and OV I, Scrapbooks*

Books

*Ambushed by Angels*

Correspondence with publisher, 1965

Miscellany, 1965-1969, n.d.

Published and annotated copy, 1965

*A Dictionary of Angels*

Correspondence with publishers, 1961-1979, n.d.  
(3 folders)

Draft, 1961, n.d.

Introduction and A-E entries  
(4 folders)

BOX 10

F-Z entries  
(6 folders)

Miscellany, 1961, 1969, n.d.

Publicity and reviews, 1967-1981, n.d.  
(3 folders)

BOX 11

Published and annotated copy, 1967

"A Dictionary of Symbols"

Correspondence with publisher, 1968-1971

Draft, 1968-1969, n.d.

"The Golden Saga: A Novel of the Time of Leif Ericsson, Discoverer of America,"  
1952-1953, n.d.  
(2 folders)

"El Gran Capitan: A Novel of the Time of Christopher Columbus, " n.d.

Miscellaneous, 1926-1928, 1944-1951, 1970-1971, n.d.

BOX 12

"Principalities and Powers," 1958, n.d.

"Root and Branch," n.d.

*The Thirst of the Antelope*, draft, 1940, n.d.

Miscellany, ca. 1940, 1959-1966, n.d.

## Writings, 1915-1981, n.d.

### Container

### Contents

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Newspaper columns for *The Daily Mirror*

Book and music reviews, 1931-1932 [See Containers 27](#) and [OV I, Scrapbooks](#)

“The Curiosity Shop,” 1931

“Toasts,” 1930-1931

#### BOX 13

Plays, 1924, 1933-1947, 1955-1964, n.d.  
(4 folders)

Poetry

Drafts

1918, 1938, 1949-1970, n.d.  
(5 folders)

#### BOX 14

Published copies, 1915, 1927-1929, 1937-1971, n.d.  
(4 folders)

Pseudonymous writings under the name “W. Gordon Drake,” 1954-1959, n.d. [See also Container 17, Free thought](#)  
(2 folders)

Speeches, 1966-1970, n.d.

Travel journals

Europe, 1933, 1950  
(2 folders)

#### BOX 15

Europe, 1965

Jamaica, 1969

#### BOX 15-27

#### **Subject File, 1909-1991, n.d.**

Correspondence, biographical material, financial matter, name and address lists, news clippings, miscellaneous writings, photographs, and research files on angels and religious topics.  
Arranged alphabetically.

#### BOX 15

Appointment calendar, 1969

Biographical material, 1944, ca. 1953-1971, n.d.

#### BOX 16

Book collecting, 1955-1970, n.d.

Certificates and diplomas, 1920, 1951-1969

**Subject File, 1909-1991, n.d.**

***Container***

***Contents***

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Chapelbrook Foundation, 1968-1969, n.d.

*Chicago Tribune*, 1968-1979, n.d.

*Cimarron Review*, 1969-1970

Dominican Republic, 1951

Fairleigh Dickinson University, Rutherford, N.J., 1963-1967, n.d.  
(2 folders)

Fine Editions Press

Correspondence, 1941-1943, 1964-1965

Miscellany, 1941-1960, n.d.

News clippings and releases, 1942-1945, n.d.

Scrapbook, ca. 1940-ca. 1945

*The Second Voice* by Anne Marx, 1963, n.d.

**BOX 17**

Free thought, 1944, 1954-1960, n.d. *See also Container 14, Pseudonymous writings under name "W. Gordon Drake"*

*Humanist*, 1958-1964

Keats, John, grave site in Rome, Italy, 1950-1955

Library of Congress, 1938-1939, 1948-1952, n.d.

Miscellany, ca. 1929-ca. 1984

Names and addresses

Booklets, ca. 1950-ca. 1970, n.d.  
(2 folders)

**BOX 18**

Card files, n.d.

**BOX 19**

Lists, 1959-1961, n.d.

New Harmony, Ind., 1958-1964, 1971, n.d.

New York Poetry Forum, 1970-1975, n.d.

*New York Times*, 1943, 1959, 1969, n.d.

**Subject File, 1909-1991, n.d.**

***Container***

***Contents***

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News clippings, 1924, 1934-1974, n.d.

*Newsweek*, 1967

Notes, n.d.

(2 folders)

Onteora Central School poetry project, Boiceville, N.Y., 1964

Pacific Islands, 1928-1933, n.d.

Photographs, ca. 1910-ca. 1970

*Poet Lore*, 1945, 1964-1970, n.d.

Poetry, miscellaneous, ca. 1950-ca. 1971

Poetry readings, 1942, 1969-1971, n.d.

**BOX 20**

Poetry Society of America

Awards

Citations, 1950-1965

Correspondence, 1949-1970

Miscellany, 1959-1985, n.d.

Press releases, 1946-1967, n.d.

Board meetings, 1958-1971, n.d.

Events, 1943-1978, 1985-1991, n.d.

(3 folders)

Financial material, 1950, 1961-1970, 1988, n.d.

**BOX 21**

General correspondence, 1940-1978, n.d.

(3 folders)

Membership lists, 1948, 1967-1970, n.d.

Miscellany, ca. 1950-ca. 1975

News clippings, 1946-1973, n.d.

(2 folders)

"Poetry in Crystal" (exhibit), 1961-1963, n.d.

**Subject File, 1909-1991, n.d.**

**Container**

**Contents**

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	Poetry workshop, 1970-1971
	Publication projects
	<i>Edward Arlington Robinson: A Centenary Memoir-Anthology</i> , 1970-1971, n.d.
BOX 22	<i>In Fealty to Apollo</i> , 1950-1957, n.d.
	Miscellaneous, 1944-1946, 1956-1960, n.d.
	Permissions file, 1959 (4 folders)
	Trip to Greece
	Correspondence, 1956-1958 (3 folders)
BOX 23	Miscellany, ca. 1956-ca. 1958
	News clippings, 1957-1963, n.d.
	Photographs, 1957[?]
	Publishing, 1917-1922 <i>For additional material see Container 16, Fine Editions Press; See Containers 21-22, Publication projects, Poetry Society of America</i>
	Research file
	Angels
	Notes, ca. 1950-ca. 1965 (2 folders)
BOX 24	Pictorial material, ca. 1950-ca. 1965
	Writings, 1951-1969, n.d. (3 folders)
BOX 25	Religious history
	Annotated books
	1911, 1929-1944, 1951-1953, n.d. (7 volumes)
BOX 26	1954-1961, n.d. (5 volumes)

## Subject File, 1909-1991, n.d.

### *Container*

### *Contents*

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BOX 27

Miscellany, ca. 1940-ca. 1965

Signs and symbols, ca. 1965-ca. 1971

Scrapbooks, 1908-1924, 1931-1932 [\*See also Oversize\*](#)

Septuagint Bible, 1954-1955

Social security, 1909-1913, 1950, 1966, n.d.

BOX OV 1

### **Oversize, 1930-1932**

Scrapbooks.

Described according to the series, container, and folder from which the items were removed.

BOX OV 1

Subject File

Scrapbooks, 1931-1932 ([\*Container 27\*](#))